

HAVERHILL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 25th September 2012 at 7.00pm in The Studio, Town Hall, High Street, Haverhill



HAVERHILL
TOWN COUNCIL

Present: **Chair: Town Councillor: P Hanlon**
 Town Councillors: L Ager, R André,
 M Byrne, L Carr,
 T Cook, P French,
 B Hawes, M Martin,
 B McLatchy, D Russo,
 A Samuels, G Stroud,
 J Stroud and C Turner

Also present: **Seven members of the public**

MINUTES

1. **Apologies for Absence**
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Cook and Goody.
2. **Declaration of Interests**
No councillor declared an interest in items on the agenda.
3. **To Confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held 4th September 2012**
The minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2012 were agreed.
5. **To deal with any urgent matters arising from the minutes not covered by this agenda**
The Town Clerk reported that the Healthcare Working Group agreed at the last meeting had met on 25th September, and had agreed specific areas of focus in developing healthcare priorities for Haverhill.

Cllr French asked why the former Crown Health Centre appeared still to be open. The Town Clerk explained that some services had been temporarily relocated from the Camps Road Clinic during refurbishment works. Cllr Byrne added that the Centre was also being used to provide leg dressings.

Cllr Hawes raised the issue of High Street pedestrianisation, and in particular ways of enforcing parking restrictions such as towing and clamping. The Town Clerk said that the issue had not been placed on this agenda as there was nothing new to report on or agree. A meeting with the Police were to take place and a report would be made following this.

Cllr Byrne said that she had twice asked for pedestrianisation to be placed on the agenda for the new meeting of the Haverhill Area Working Party (HAWP) and had yet to be advised whether the request

ACTION

had been accepted. She would now be pursuing Cllr Richardson [Chair of HAWP] direct.

The Town Clerk reported that the ONE Haverhill Board had voted not to allow public access to its meetings at its meeting on 25th September.

Cllr Byrne expressed her regret that the public were being denied access to an important meeting, and that transparency and accountability would be pursued.

Cllr André reported that he had attended the meeting and had been persuaded that public accountability could be improved by ways other than direct public access to the meetings. The publication of notes of the meetings provided one such avenue, and he was hesitant about 'rocking the balance' at an important time in the Community Budget pilot.

Cllr Hawes said that he supported Cllr Byrne's view, and that keeping the meetings closed might make the public feel that the Board had something to hide.

Cllr Hanlon expressed his concern that the £50,000 ONE Haverhill grant fund lacked accountability.

Cllr French said that the exclusion of the public defied the name 'ONE Haverhill', and that this was not the way forward towards gaining public trust.

Cllr Byrne said that the Town Council needed to remain involved to ensure that work on the Neighbourhood Community Budget continued, but that she would like to see publication of the ONE Haverhill Board members' voting.

6. Inspector Peter Ferrie

Inspector Ferrie reported that the news on crime in Haverhill was generally good, with numbers down in nearly all categories. He advised the following statistics:

Type of crime	3 Year Average	This Year
Total crime	999	862
Domestic burglary	27	18
Other burglary	78	45
Criminal damage/arson	284	217
Anti-social behaviour	975	643
Rowdy & inconsiderate behaviour	579	372

Three areas had shown slight increases:

Type of crime	3 Year Average	This Year
Violence without injury	66	81
Sexual offences	13	18
Public order offences	45	56

Inspector Ferrie reported on intended actions in relation to

traffic/parking enforcement in the High Street. Four enforcement action days would take place, the first on 1st October.

He added that PC Will Wright had been allocated to look at longer term solutions, engaging with other relevant organisations. PC Wright would have full authority to implement plans as needed.

Cllr Hanlon thanked Inspector Ferrie for the proposed action, which he considered a better solution than clamping.

Cllr Turner raised a concern about potentially dangerous dogs not on leads in the duck ponds area. A recent incident in Cambridge involving a girl being attacked highlighted the danger.

Inspector Ferrie advised that the law was not strong in relation to dog offences. There were two main offences, which were only useful in serious cases. Otherwise, the only measure available was to give words of advice.

Councillors agreed that dog owners needed to understand their responsibilities, and should seek areas where it was safe to let their dog off its lead.

Cllr Hanlon thanked Inspector Ferrie for his attendance and his report.

7. To receive a presentation from Haverhill Town Pastors and a request for funding

Captain Andrew Payne, Ian Levitt and David Payne attended and presented for the Haverhill Town Pastors. They gave a commentary on the different types and numbers of issues dealt with, and some specific examples. One recent case had involved someone whose behaviour was the result of a grieving situation. On the same evening a man suffering from cancer had collapsed and had been drinking, and had said that he would die how he wanted to die.

Captain Payne explained how the use of chocolate bars helped to diffuse difficult situations, and the importance of support via the Townlink radio system.

Ian Levitt described a recent situation involving a group of young people on the roof of the toilets by the church. He said that CCTV had helped resolve the situation calmly, and had provided a sense of security to the Pastors.

David Payne thanked Cllr Hawes for his attendance on the previous Friday. He recalled a situation involving noise in the car park, which the Police had attended. Cllr Hawes remarked that the Police had taken their lead from the Pastors in resolving the situation.

Councillors asked questions about the number of volunteers and the way in which they are recruited. Captain Payne explained that there were 15 volunteers, recruited via Haverhill and District Churches.

Councillors congratulated the Town Pastors on their professionalism, excellent personal skills and their success in contributing to the

reduction in anti-social behaviour in the town.

Councillors approved a contribution of £3,000 towards the costs of running the Town Pastor scheme, for radio hire, insurance, the hire of a base, supplies of chocolate bars and other costs, to maintain their operation for another year.

Cllr Byrne requested that the Town Pastors provide an update on their activities and the use of the Town Council's funding. Captain Payne agreed to this.

The Mayor, with the agreement of the Council, adjourned the meeting at 7.50pm for the public forum.

There being no matters raised by the public, the Mayor resumed the meeting with the agreement of the Council at 7.50pm.

7. Adoption of Committee Reports

Finance Committee

The Council moved the adoption of the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 4th September 2012.

Leisure & Community Committee

The Council moved the adoption of the minutes of the Leisure & Community Committee meeting held on 18th September 2012.

8. To approve the annual External Audit form

The Town Clerk introduced this item, explaining that the External Auditor had provided a report confirming that the Council's annual return had highlighted no concerns.

Two minor issues had been raised separately from this confirmation; the first was a rounding error of £1 in the annual return which would be looked into by the Town Clerk. The other concerned Fidelity Insurance, with a recommendation that this should be increased.

Councillors approved and accepted the Annual Return incorporating the audit opinion.

Councillors further agreed that the fidelity insurance should be increased as recommended, and that it should be reviewed annually at Finance Committee.

TOWN CLERK

TOWN CLERK

9. To authorise payments.

Councillors authorised the following cheque lists:-

Date	Cheque Numbers	Value
04.09.12	008132 – 008151	£50,735.16
11.09.12	008152 – 008166	£2,679.19

10. To receive urgent correspondence

No items of urgent correspondence had been received.

At 7.57pm Councillors agreed that, in accordance with the Provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

11. Burton Centre

Councillors discussed and agreed the Town Council's submission to Suffolk County Council to take on the ownership and management of the Burton Centre, Haverhill.

12. Closure

The meeting was closed at 8.27pm.

